

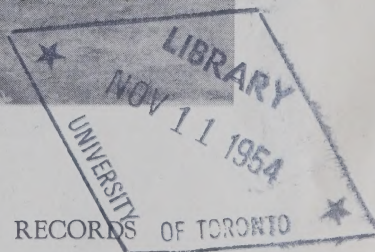
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# FORT WELLINGTON NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

## PRESCOTT, ONTARIO

### CANADA



A WISE NATION PRESERVES ITS RECORDS  
---GATHERS UP ITS MUNIMENTS---DECOR-  
ATES THE TOMBS OF ITS ILLUSTRIOUS  
DEAD---REPAIRS ITS GREAT PUBLIC  
STRUCTURES AND FOSTERS NATIONAL  
PRIDE AND LOVE OF COUNTRY BY  
PERPETUAL REFERENCE TO THE SACRI-  
FICES AND GLORIES OF THE PAST.

... Joseph Howe

Issued under the authority of  
THE HONOURABLE JEAN LESAGE, Minister of  
Northern Affairs and National Resources







## FORT WELLINGTON NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

### Prescott, Ontario

**F**ORT WELLINGTON, which overlooks the majestic St. Lawrence River, was the military stronghold of the Prescott region for half a century. In addition to housing a garrison during extended periods, the fort was called upon for national service on several occasions from the date of its first construction in 1812 until its final abandonment in 1886.

On the outbreak of the War of 1812-14 the British authorities decided to fortify Prescott as one of the most vulnerable points of attack, and as the main base for the defence of communications, between Kingston and Montreal. Fort Wellington was built and named after the Duke of Wellington, whose victory at Salamanca had just then been announced.

The first site selected was Windmill Point, then called New Jerusalem. There General Sir Jeffrey Amherst had his headquarters when, in 1760, he destroyed Fort de Levis and he, no doubt, had recommended it as a suitable site for a fortification. However, when war was actually declared by the United States in 1812, the present location for the fort was chosen and its erection begun.

The main building took the form of a square blockhouse, built of wood and earth, with accommodation for officers and men. At the back of the blockhouse were later constructed artillery barracks, officers' quarters, engineers' storerooms, stables, a forge, a large woodyard, and a lime kiln. The blockhouse was built to accommodate 153 men, and the barracks north of the fort provided quarters for an additional 110 men. The buildings were constructed under the direction of Lt.-Col. Thomas Pearson and Lt.-Col. George R. J. Macdonell, with members of the militia of Grenville County aiding in the work.

The ground reserved for the fort extended to 82½ acres, most of which was cleared. The armament consisted of four 24-pound guns, two 18-pounders and three 12-pounders. At the water's edge, where now stands the Canadian Pacific Railway station, was a battery for the defence of the river.

During the War of 1812-14 two attacks were made by the garrison against Ogdensburg on the opposite bank of the St. Lawrence; the first of these was unsuccessful, but the famous second attack, under Lt.-Col. Macdonell, resulted in the capture of the town and the command of the river.

Fort Wellington also came into action during General Wilkinson's projected attack upon Montreal in 1813. The guns of the fort fired on the passing fleet without apparently doing much damage, though perhaps adding to the discouragement which led finally to the American General's retirement from the field.

After peace was declared in 1815, it was considered that the fort was no longer required, and in 1823 much of the reservation was put up for sale to accommodate the needs of the growing town of Prescott. The grounds were divided into lots and the barracks and buildings at the north fell into private hands. The present area covers only 8½ acres.

In the Rebellion of 1838 Fort Wellington again became the scene of activity and here Lt.-Col. Plomer Young assembled his forces to repel the invasion at Windmill Point. He found the buildings so dilapidated, however, as to be almost useless. After the Battle of the Windmill, military

engineers came from Kingston and rebuilt the blockhouse in the substantial form in which it is seen to-day. A garrison of the Royal Artillery remained at the fort for some years after this period.

By 1866 Fort Wellington had been abandoned, but with news of Fenian raids from the United States side, a local battery of garrison artillery occupied it for a time.

During the Red River Rebellion of 1870 the fort was garrisoned by a company of the 56th Battalion under Captain Hunter. It was also occupied by a garrison in 1886, during the North West Rebellion, after which it was finally relinquished as a military stronghold.

The visitor today who reaches Prescott by railway or motor highway will see the fort immediately east of the town, rising above the ramparts and surrounded by a tall palisade.

In the centre of the enclosure stands the blockhouse, a massive stone building of three storeys, fifty feet square with walls four feet thick, pierced with loop-holes. The upper portion, faced with wood, projects beyond the stonework and contains a gallery equipped with trap doors through which the defenders could drop missiles and fire at any enemy who might scale the ramparts and reach the walls of the fort.

On the south side is the entrance to the blockhouse through a narrow opening, guarded by a heavy door. On the ground floor are four rooms, the magazine room on the left, originally used for the storage of non-explosive material, and a similar room on the right, which is now used to house part of the museum exhibits. Along the passage are two adjoining rooms, which, guarded by strong copper-lined doors and furnished with ventilators, formed the powder magazine of the fort. Beneath the floor of the passageway is a well 45 feet deep, designed to supply the fort with water in case of siege.

Passing from the interior of the blockhouse to the parade ground, the visitor's attention is attracted by a subterranean passage about three feet in width and lined with heavy stone, which leads to the caponniere. This building, oblong in shape, with curved end towards the south, was erected in 1838 and was intended as an additional defence to guard the ramparts in case of attack.

On the east of the enclosure stands the original officers' quarters, built in 1812. This building has been renovated and is used as the custodian's residence.

The small log building north of the blockhouse was erected as a residence by Edward Jessup. It was later used as a guardhouse by the various garrisons stationed at Fort Wellington. Edward Jessup was born in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1735. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War he took up arms for the King and joined the Army, under General Burgoyne. After the war Jessup settled in the township of Augusta, founding the town of Prescott, where he died in 1816.

In 1923, Fort Wellington was placed under the care of the National Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior, and is now administered by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

The museum, situated on the ground floor of the blockhouse, contains many articles of historical interest. The following is a brief description of a number of the exhibits on display:—

Along the south wall is an important collection of British Arms, which includes examples of all the principal rifles from the Brown Bess flintlock, used in the War of 1812, to the Ross rifle, used in World War I; also various sizes of cannon balls, including grape-shot and canister.



At the north end is a heavy wooden mangle equipped with maple rollers and weighted with a ton of stone. It was used in the household of Alpheus Jones in the early part of the 19th century and is believed to be the only one of its kind in Canada. Also on display is the original warrant issued to Alpheus Jones in 1816, appointing him Postmaster at Fort Wellington. He was born in 1794, a son of Ephraim Jones, a native of the Mohawk Valley, who came to Canada after the American Revolution and represented Grenville in the first Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada (1792-6). Alpheus Jones was Collector of Customs and Postmaster at Prescott, where he died in 1863.

On the east wall are a number of ramrods that were used with muzzle loading cannon, also a sweep used for propelling a small river craft.

Along the west wall are a handmade bicycle, a cradle about a hundred and thirty years old, a spinning wheel, and a collection of old documents and pictures of historical interest.

At the northwest corner of the room is a piano, brought from England in 1821 by the Reverend Robert Blakey, who came to Canada to take charge of the Anglican Mission of Prescott and Augusta.

**Case No. 1**—Contains, among other exhibits, a trumpet used in the Battle of the Windmill; pistols, including a flintlock used in the Battle of the Windmill; friction tubes for firing muzzle loading cannon; rope wads for charging cannon; and shot and powder flasks.

**Case No. 2**—Contains a collection of swords, including one that was used at the Battle of the Windmill. This engagement took place in November, 1838, when a company of filibusters under the command of a Polish officer named Von Schultz crossed from Ogdensburg and was met by the Canadian Militia. Von Schultz and his men were forced to surrender unconditionally. The windmill from which the battle takes its name is situated about a mile and a half east of Prescott. It was converted into a lighthouse in 1873.

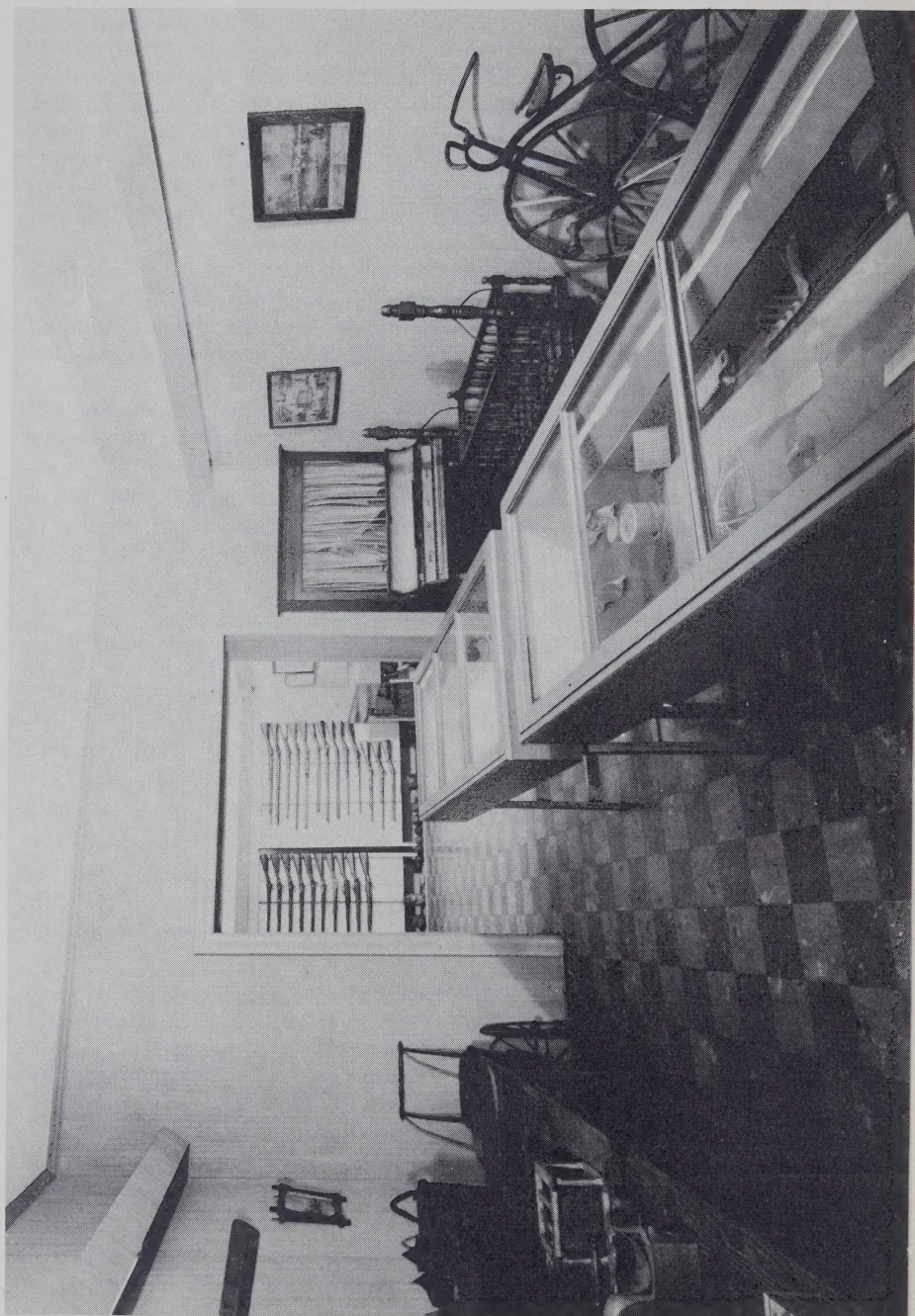
**Case No. 3**—Contains Indian squaw's beaded dress, Indian skinning knives and gouges; also early Indian pottery.

**Case No. 4**—Contains articles associated with the pioneer days of Prescott and vicinity. These include a goffering iron, skates, handmade comb, candle wick, handmade nails and chisel, and a mill pick used for cutting grooves in mill stones.

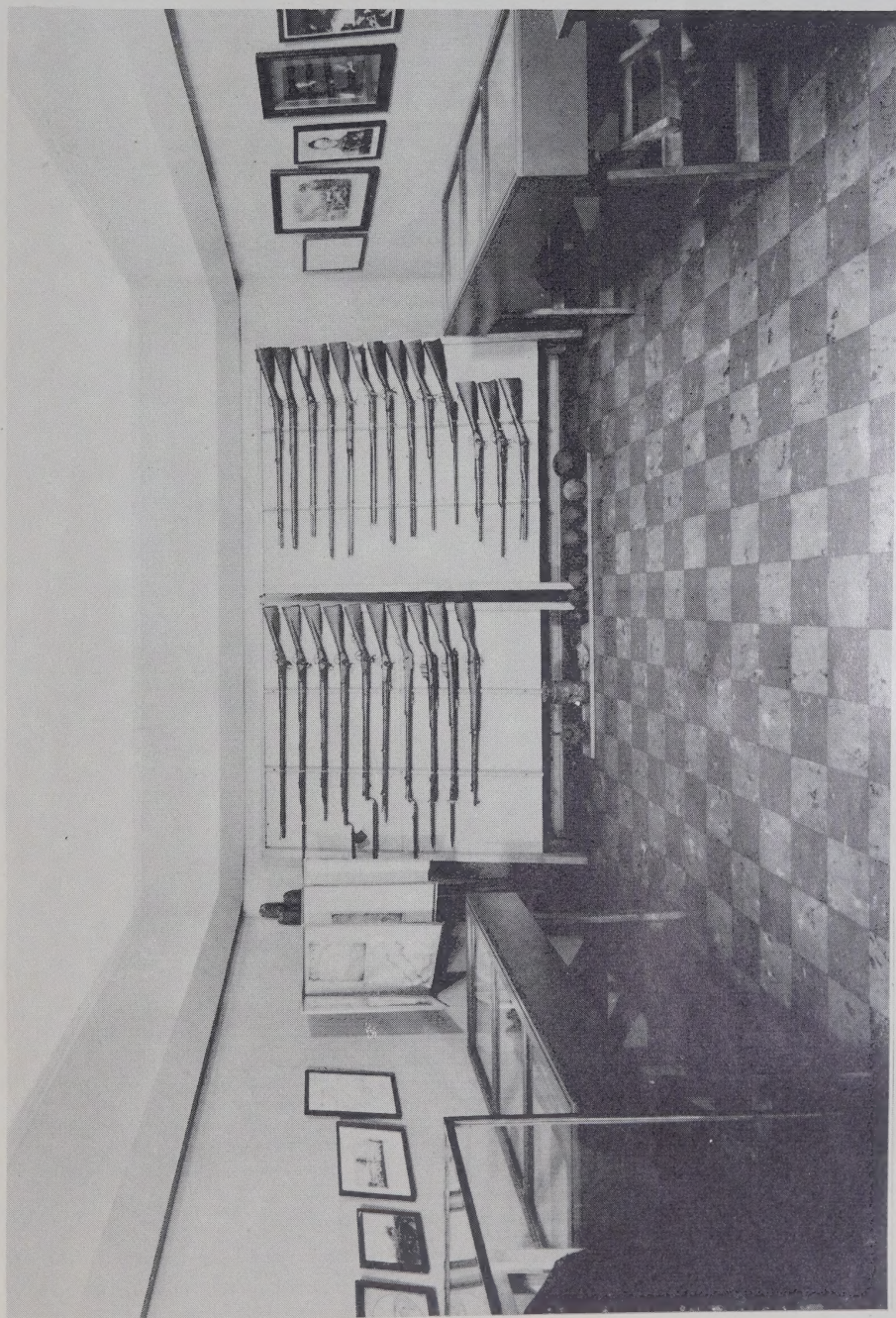
Displayed on the tables along the east wall are articles which were in use about the time Fort Wellington was built. These include candle moulds, a bed-warmer, griddles, a handmade axe, foot-warmer, hide covered saddle trunk, clock reels for measuring wool, leather water bucket, old lanterns, and a compass belonging to the schooner *Polly M. Rogers*.

The wall case contains uniforms of the period from 1837 to 1885.









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